

**Notice of Allowability**

Application No.

10/043,098

Examiner

Anh Ly

Applicant(s)

SCHIRMER ET AL.

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 06/22/2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-5, 7-10, 13-16 & 19-22 (renumbered as 1-17).
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some\* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

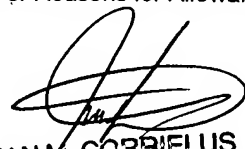
Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

  
JEAN M. CORRIELLUS  
PRIMARY EXAMINER

### DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is response to Applicants' Appeal Brief filed on 06/22/2005.

### EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Sean L. Ingram (Reg. No.: 48,283) on 10/28/2005.

Claim 1 is amended as the following:

**A method for enabling a user to refine a search query using a graphical user interface, the method comprising the steps of:**

**presenting a graphical user interface to a user;**

**enabling a user to selectively input search parameters into a first search query using the graphical user interface; , wherein the step of presenting comprising the steps of:**

**receiving the first search query;**

**searching at least one database for objects that satisfy the first search query;**

**determining whether at least one object stored in the database satisfies the first search query;**

**retrieving a first search result comprising the at least one object if a determination is made that the at least one object satisfies the first search query;**

**determining a type of information included in the at least one object associated with the first search result;**

**determining at least one search refinement option based on the type of information determined; and**

**searching the first search result for objects that satisfy a second search query, the second search query comprising the at least one search refinement option.**

3. Claims 1-5, 7-10, 13-16 and 19-22 are allowed.

#### **Allowable Subject Matter**

4. The present application has been thoroughly reviewed. Upon searching a variety of databases, the examiner respectfully submits that claims 1-5, 7-10, 13-16 and 19-22 are allowed in light of the applicants' argument and in light of the prior arts of made record.

5. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The claimed invention is directed to a computer-implemented method, a computer system and a processor readable medium for enabling a user to refine a

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search query using a graphical user interface. A search of a database is performed according to a search query to produce an initial search result. Based on the relevant of the initial search, the search query may be refined and a refined search may be performed that includes searching only those objects includes in the initial search result. A type of information included in the at least one object associated with the first search result may be determined, searching the first search result for objects that satisfy a second search query, the second search query may be determined by a search refinement option.

The closest prior arts, Bowman et al. of US Patent No.: 6,169,986 (hereinafter Bowman) teaches receiving a search query from a user submitting via GUI, display search result and facilitating the refinement of search queries. Neal et al. of US Patent No.: 6,907,424 (hereinafter Neal) teaches narrowing down the search by using the drop-down menu list to select the type of information to be included in the search result. And Gjerdingen et al. of US Patent No.: 6,539,395 (hereinafter Gjerdingen) teaches using the second search query, which is inputted by a user via GUI in order to refine the search result set from the first search query and the result of the refined search are presented to the user.

Thus, In combination, Bowman and Neal and Gjerdingen fail to teach "searching the first search result for objects that satisfy a second search query, the second search query comprising the at least one search refinement option."

These distinct features, in conjunction with all other limitations of the dependents and independent claims render claims 1-5, 7-10, 13-16 and 19-22 them allowable.

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Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."


**Contact Information**

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anh Ly whose telephone number is (571) 272-4039 or via E-Mail: ANH.LY@USPTO.GOV or fax to **(571) 273-4039**. The examiner can normally be reached on TUESDAY – THURSDAY from 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Breene, can be reached on (571) 272-4107 or **Primary Examiner Jean Corrielus (571) 272-4032**.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). Any response to this action should be mailed to: Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231, or faxed to: Central Fax Center **(571) 273-8300**

  
JEAN CORRIELUS  
PRIMARY EXAMINER

ANH LY   
OCT. 28<sup>th</sup>, 2005